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LETTER DATED 7 NOVEMBER 1997 FROM THE ACTING PERMANENT OBSERVER OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Pursuant to Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, I have the honour, to transmit a copy of the communiqué issued by the fortieth session of the Central Organ of the Organization of African Unity Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, which met at the ambassadorial level in Addis Ababa on 6 November 1997. I should be grateful if the text of the communiqué could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Christopher J. BAKWESEGHA
Acting Permanent Observer

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Annex

Communiqué of the fortieth session of the Central Organ of the Organization of African Unity Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, meeting at the ambassadorial level in Addis Ababa on 6 November 1997

The Central Organ of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution held its fortieth session at the ambassadorial level on 6 November 1997. The session took place under the chairmanship of Mr. B. G. Godwyli, Ambassador of Ghana to Ethiopia and representative of the First Vice-Chairman of the Bureau of the Summit of OAU.

The Central Organ considered the reports of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros and in the Republic of the Congo.

Situation in the Comoros

The Central Organ was of the view that the actions of the separatist movement on Anjouan represented a serious threat to the peace, security and stability of the Comoros and to the countries of the Indian Ocean in general. It also presented a serious precedent, likely to be emulated elsewhere in Africa and undermine one of the most fundamental principles of the OAU, namely, that of territorial integrity. Respect for this principle has thus far greatly contributed to the maintenance of peace, security and stability on the continent.

At the end of the deliberations, the Central Organ:

1. Encouraged the Secretary-General in his efforts to reactivate the negotiation process and to establish conditions for the convening, as soon as possible, of the international conference and gave its full support to the decision of the Secretary-General again to send his Special Envoy to the archipelagos of the Comoros to resume contact with all the parties concerned in order to promote a negotiated solution within the purview of the unity and territorial integrity of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros;

2. Requested the Secretary-General to continue to undertake in-depth consultations and investigations on the dynamics and evolution of the problems in the Comoros;

3. Authorized the deployment of OAU military observers in the Comoros. The goal of any such deployment would be to avert a worsening of the situation, and the restoration of a minimum level of confidence among the people of those islands where deployment occurred. In addition, deployment would aim to encourage the establishment of a climate conducive to inter-Comorian negotiations;

4. Reiterated its condemnation of the recent referendum on Anjouan and its consequences;

5. Called upon all Member States and the international community to declare null and void the result of the referendum held on 26 October 1997 in Anjouan and to reiterate their support for the efforts made by OAU for a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the crisis in the Comoros;

6. Strongly urged all the Comorian parties to cooperate fully with OAU in its efforts and to refrain from any action likely to aggravate the situation and to complicate the efforts being undertaken for a peaceful and negotiated settlement with due regard to the unity, cohesion and territorial integrity of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros;

7. Requested the Secretary-General to urgently consider all appropriate measures which could be taken to contribute to the preservation of the unity and territorial integrity of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.

Situation in the Republic of the Congo

The Central Organ took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Republic of the Congo, and called upon all Member States and the international community to extend urgent humanitarian assistance for the resettlement of refugees and displaced persons as well as assistance to all the people of the Republic of the Congo.